Amendment to the Claims

The following listing reflects amendments to the claims and replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1. [[1.]] (Currently Amendned) A pharmaceutical composition for storage and subsequent release of nitric oxide (NO) for delivery to a human or animal, the composition comprising:

a partially or fully dehydrated aluminosilicate zeolite and a pharmaceutically~~, nutraceutically or cosmetically~~ acceptable carrier,

wherein the partially or fully dehydrated zeolite comprises: (i) extra-framework cations selected from the group consisting of Ca, Mg, Fe, Cu, Ru, Rh, Co, Ni, Zn and Ag, effective to bind nitric oxide, and (ii) nitric oxide bound to the extra-framework cations, whereby the nitric oxide is released by displacement by moisture upon exposure of the composition to moisture at body or room temperature.

2. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, wherein the extra framework cations are selected from the group consisting of ~~Ca,~~ Mg, Fe, Cu, ~~Ru~~, ~~Rh,~~ Co, and Ni, ~~Zn and Ag~~.

3. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, wherein the extra-framework cations comprise a transition metal.

4. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, wherein the zeolite has an LTA (Linde Type A / Zeolite A) framework structure.

5. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 4, wherein the zeolite is selected from the group consisting of Ni-LTA(A), Cu-LTA(A), Co-LTA(A), [[Mn]] Mg-LTA(A), and Fe-LTA(A)[[,]].

6. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, in

the form of a powder or a monolith.

7. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 6, wherein the composition is in the form of a monolith comprising a powdered zeolite and a binder.

8. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 7, wherein the binder is selected from ceramic binders and polymeric binders.

9-41. Canceled.

42. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 8, wherein said ceramic binder is either silica or alumina, and said polymeric binder is selected from the group consisting of polysulfone, polyethylene, polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polystyrene and polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE).

43. Canceled.

44. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, in anhydrous form.

45. (Currently Amended) A medical article for storage and subsequent release of nitric oxide for delivery to a human or animal, the medical article selected from the group consisting of wound dressings, bandages and patches and comprising the pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1.

46. Canceled.

47. (Currently Amended) The medical article of claim 45, wherein said medical article is ~~selected from the group consisting of stents, catheters,~~ a wound dressing[[s]]~~,~~

~~bandages, self-adhesive plasters and patches~~.

48. - 52. Cancelled.

53. (Currently Amended) A medical article of claim 45, ~~comprising the composition of claim 1,~~ wherein the pharmaceutically~~, nutraceutically or cosmetically~~ acceptable carrier is a binder that is either a ceramic binder or a polymeric binder and the composition is in the form of a monolith.

54. (New) A sealed airtight package comprising the pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, whereby, as a result of said packaging, exposure of the pharmaceutical composition to moisture and premature release of nitric oxide is prevented.

55. (New) The sealed airtight package of claim 54, comprising the pharmaceutical composition in anhydrous form.

56. (New) A sealed airtight package comprising the medical article according to claim 45, whereby, as a result of said packaging, exposure of the pharmaceutical composition to moisture and premature release of nitric oxide is prevented.

57. (New) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein the zeolite has a framework structure selected from LTA (Linde Type A / zeolite A), FAU (faujasite), MFI (ZSM-5), MOR (mordenite), FER (ferrierite), BEA (zeolite beta), PHI (zeolite Phi) and SAS (STA-6/St. Andrews Six).

58. (New) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein the extra-framework cations are monovalent, divalent or trivalent cations.

59. (New) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 1, wherein the aluminosilicate zeolite possesses an aluminum to extra-framework cation ratio ranging from 1.50 to 17.82.